

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, the specification will have been amended to correct the Brief Description of the Drawings with respect to Figs. 15 and 16. In particular, the description of Fig. 15 was amended to provide that Fig. 15 is a sectional view of Fig. 13 (taken in the direction of the arrows substantially along the line XV-XV of Fig. 13. See page 40, lines 3-4. The description of Fig. 16 was amended to provide that Fig. 16 is a sectional view of Fig. 13 (taken in the direction of the arrows substantially along the line XVI-XVI of Fig. 13. See page 41, lines 9-10. No prohibited new matter has been inserted in the application because Figs. 15 and 16 were accurately described in the detailed description of the specification, as indicated above.

Further, upon entry of the present amendment, the drawings will have been amended to address objections to Figs. 1 and 16 by the draftsman. The attached sheets of formal drawings include the changes to Figs. 1 and 16 made in response to the objections. In particular, Fig. 1 is amended to include uniformly thick and well-defined lines, numbers and letters. Fig. 16 is amended to include a bracket indicating that the elements separated by a space are part of the same device. Applicants note that the nature of the draftsman's objection to Fig. 16 was unclear, and may have been adequately addressed by the foregoing amendment to the specification. Regardless, the present amendment to Fig. 16 more clearly shows that the separated elements are part of the same device (shown in plane view in Fig. 13). These changes do not introduce new matter.

In the above-referenced Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over KANEKO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,765) in view of KANEKO et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,304,669) Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, at

least for the reasons stated below.

The KANEKO et al. ('669) patent was filed on November 9, 1998. In comparison, the present application claims priority from two foreign patent applications: JP 10-277333 (filed September 30, 1998) and JP 10-281004 (filed October 2, 1998), both of which predate the filing date of KANEKO et al. ('669). To perfect their claim of priority, Applicants submit with this Reply copies of certified translations of JP 10-277333 and JP 10-281004.

Because the present invention predates the filing date of KANEKO et al. ('669) patent, the KANEKO et al. ('669) patent is not prior art and cannot be relied upon by the Examiner as a secondary reference in rejecting claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Furthermore, with respect to claim 1, the Examiner admitted that the primary reference, KANEKO et al. ('765) does not teach, for example, assistant point members, respectively defining at least one of the assistant points, being positioned on a first straight line and a second straight line that are clearly discerned in the photographed picture. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections based on the combination including the reference KANEKO et al. ('669) is respectfully requested.

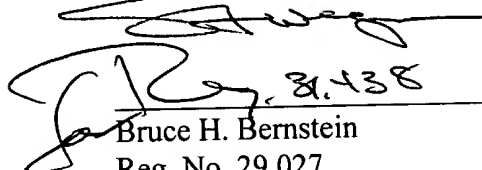
With regard to claims 2-6, Applicants assert that they are allowable at least because they depend, directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, which Applicants submit has been shown to be allowable.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of previously asserted rejections set forth in the Official Action of April 24, 2003, together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is believed to be appropriate and proper.

P17997.A06

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this Reply or the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,  
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